

Citizen Advocates

Making a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities.



Annual Report

2012

Advocacy with Traction!

Making a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

DID YOU KNOW?

A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS FROM THE PRESIDENT, SANDY PASSINEAU



This past year, 2012, marked the 34th year that Citizen Advocates has been matching partners and advocates. From the beginning in 1978, we've striven to help create freely given friendships (partnerships) that will last as long as friendships remain important. With your help we've been able to do this hundreds of times over the past several decades. And with your continued help we'll redouble our efforts in 2013, our fourth decade of service to Washington County communities.

As the new President of the Board of directors, I wasn't sure that there was much to report this soon into my term other than that CA is alive and well. This is an accomplishment for our organization given the decline in charitable giving as the economy struggled over the last few years and being one of a few non-profits that does not receive any government funding.

Beyond that I wasn't sure that there was much to report. When I became President last September, our numbers had dropped as low as they've ever been. Yet that has turned out not to be such a bad thing.

As I think about how our Board of Directors has gained traction over the last (6) months I see that our small number gave us the unique opportunity to come together as a core group and look at our unique skills and talents and where we can be most effective. We've also had the opportunity to examine what we needed on the Board going forward and think through our choices in welcoming new, or even returning, Board members.

Since the beginning of this year we have added two more members and I couldn't be more pleased. The Board of CA is truly a working Board. We each lend our time and talents outside of scheduled Board meetings. We are blessed to have someone who knows our Program inside and out, someone who is analytical and gifted in creating tools for tracking and reporting, we have someone who lends their creative and organizational talent to our events, we have an IT professional and we even have a Psychologist who specializes in working with the disabled community.

As if that weren't enough, we have two Advocates and parent of someone with developmental disabilities. Being that involved in our program, in our disabilities community helps us remember why we come together to govern this organization. To be responsible in the management of the resources of CA and always remember why we do what we do, to make a positive difference in the lives of those with disabilities.

We have a solid foundational group who loves Citizen Advocates and a strong sense of stewardship for this organization. Our Directors are known to spend long hours are dedicated to events, juggle schedules around, spread the word about Program or needs of the organization, making connections, all to move CA forward in its purpose and mission. We can become hardened in our world and forget there are still selfless people who work toward a common goal, even if it does not benefit them directly. Just another thing that makes CA so special. I am both humbled and proud to be part of this Board and I look forward to working with them for years to come.

Sandy Passineau
President

DID YOU KNOW?

A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS FROM OUR PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Jessica Frederick

Take a few moments to think about all the people in your life. Write them down. Start by listing your family and close friends. Next list all your friends, the ones that aren't your first phone call when something happens, but that you do share parts of your life with. When you are finished with that, list your acquaintances, those people you know and wave hi to ... maybe you don't know their name, but you see them everyday ... list them too. If you still have room on your sheet, write the people in your life that are paid to be there, doctors, teachers, the coffee shop barista, the check out person you see each week.

For many of us, when you complete the exercise above, our list is long. We realize how many people we call friends and how important they are to our lives. They are the people we call on when good and bad things happen. They are the people we call when we need to get a suggestion for a new doctor, cable provider, auto shop. They are the people that we rely on to share our life's journey.

Recently a woman that runs multiple group homes in Washington County approached Citizen Advocates about finding advocates for some of the people living in their homes. We sat down and met with each person and while I got to know the people, over and over again the staff said that they were concerned about these people because they had no one, outside of the staff, to speak up for them. One of the men we visited with is the last surviving member of his family; his parents and sibling are gone. The people he lives with, that he spends his day with, are paid to be there.

Rethink about the exercise above, but instead of listing your friends, list the people in the man's life I just mentioned. He has no close friends or family. His friends and acquaintances are his housemates and co-workers, all of varying abilities, put together by staff, not by his choice. The longest list he has is the paid people in his life. And as we all know, they come and go, after all, it is a job for them.

Over the last year, I have done this exercise with many who want to know more about Citizen Advocates, high schoolers and middle schoolers who are a part of our Community Partners program, groups that we are looking to join our Community Connections program. It is a tangible way to help people to realize how many people are in their lives and how important it is to have those people.

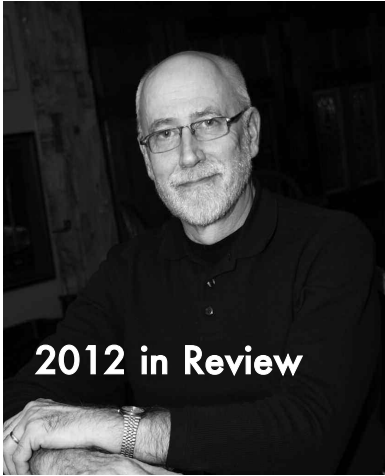
Through Citizen Advocates you have the opportunity to expand someone's circle of support. You can be the one they call for help with something going on in their lives. The financial situation for many of the people we work with is changing and without someone to advocate for them, without people on their list that they can call, the future is scary.

It is so important that community members stand up for those in the community whose voices are quieter, whose needs for someone to stand beside them as a friend is just as great as everyone else's. Consider becoming an advocate, consider getting a group of friends together to advocate for a group of people with disabilities as part of our Community Connections Program. How great is it to be a part of someone's list and to help that list grow!

Thank you for your continued support of Citizen Advocates!
Jessica Frederick
Program Coordinator



As Program Coordinator, Jessica brings a passion and commitment to her job that has been instrumental in moving our program into new and exciting areas of advocacy. From the *Community Partners* in three area High Schools to the new *Community Connections* program Jessica wears many hats well. You may call Jessica any time at 262.334.3384 or drop her an email at: jfrederick@cawash.org. Currently we are seeking advocates for a number of potential partners. We are also seeking groups and individuals interested in volunteering for our *Community Connections* program. If you are interested, please go to: www.cawash.org/advocatesneeded.html.



A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MARK BRUNNER

WE WANT YOU TO KNOW

WE MADE 27 CITIZEN ADVOCATE MATCHES IN 2012.

On average it takes between six and eight months to make a match. Because partners are vulnerable we take an appropriate amount of time to find just the right advocate. All advocates must pass stringent background checks prior to meeting a potential partner. This year we are actively following 49 matches in the Washington County area. (Many matches chose to remain private and we are careful not to impose. We only follow matches that choose to stay in touch with us.) We closed 1 match in 2012 due to death or an advocate or partner that has moved to another area of the county.

- 2 *Community Connections* matches established benefitting 9 individuals.
 - 3 *Community Partners* programs continue in Germantown, Kewaskum, and West Bend East/West High Schools.
- Our office space continues as a community resource for dozens of individuals with developmental disabilities spending time at *Our Place*.
- A partner continues to work in the CA office.
 - 3 new peer matches in Washington County in 2012.

WE WANT YOU TO KNOW

78% OF YOUR INVESTMENT WAS INVESTED IN PROGRAM IN 2012.

According to our auditor, Diezler, Kieckhafer and Hauser, 22% of our income is normally spent on administrative costs. That means 80% of your investment in our Citizen Advocates program is invested in program support and program growth. We are a small program with a small staff. Our income budget is slightly more than \$100,000 a year. A small program will normally have a higher salary to income ratio. We are proud to tell you that 78% of the investments we receive from donors like you are reinvested in program. And, that's the way we want to keep it. 2012 was again a very difficult financial year for most nonprofits; and it was no different for Citizen Advocates. We saw our income stream decrease by nearly 8% over 2011 and nearly 11% over 2010. Investments continue to decline from businesses, organizations and even some of our sustaining, foundation donors. We continued to cut expenses over the course of these last three years, but are having a difficult time matching the decline in income. We reduced our overhead by 23% in 2012 by moving offices and reducing utilities. We go into 2013, however, with a healthy and growing program and, thankfully, a budget that is manageable. Thank you for your consistent support. We couldn't do it without you.

2012 Income: \$104,000
 2012 Program Investment: \$83,200
 2013 Projected Income: \$115,000
 2013 Projected Program Investment: \$92,340

WE WANT YOU TO KNOW

WE CHANGED OUR NAME IN 2012 TO CITIZEN ADVOCATES, BUT OUR MISSION REMAINS CONSTANT.

Although we changed our name from Citizen Advocacy to Citizen Advocates in 2012, we continue to be an independent, non-profit organization that creates and supports one-on-one relationships between volunteer advocates and groups of advocates and people with disabilities. Established in 1978, Citizen Advocates has provided and supported over 350 relationships, some over 30 years long. Our non-profit organization is funded by foundation grants, United Way, fundraisers, donations from individuals and businesses, and contributions from various community, civic, and religious organizations. Our continuing mission is to "create relationships which make a positive difference in the lives of persons with disabilities." The logo may have changed and our name slightly, but we remain dedicated to the mission of citizen advocacy as established over 35 years ago in Washington County.